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Fisheries Management: Is Europe turning the corner?

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This speech title, borrowed from Australian T. Smith (2013), illustrates what nobody thought would be possible just few years ago: Europe is on the path towards successful fisheries management and recovery of fish stocks, after decades of bad news. This positive development hasn't come on its own though, and to a very large extent it can be attributed to political changes, rather than natural changes. A better application of standard management tools in the last ten years has first halted the decline. But importantly, Europe is also increasingly aiming to modern and ambitious management tools, which revolutionize the principles and the means that govern fisheries. The 2013 Reform of the Common Fishery Policy aims to implement, among others, MSY-based (Maximum Sustainable Yield) management objectives, mixed-fisheries management plans, a ban on discarding of commercial fish, catch quota management, regionalisation, and results-based management instead of technical rules; all of them contributing to making fisheries management more effective, more holistic and better complied with.

Should these goals be successful, amazing progresses will have been achieved. But the path to each of these new paradigms is individually long and difficult; and when changing them all together at the same time, the risks of failure are real. In this talk, I will provide a global overview on what is going on around us, which successes have been achieved where and why, and what are the main threats and hurdles that deserve specific attention over the next few years.

Ref:

Smith, Anthony D M, 2013. Fishery Management: Is Europe Turning the Corner? Current Biology — 2013, Volume 23, Issue 15, pp. R661-R662